

"What Everyone Should Know About the Holy Spirit" Part 5 - 1 Corinthians 12:14-17 – December 6th, 2015

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series I've titled, "What Everyone Should Know About the Holy Spirit."
- One of the reasons I chose this title is that there's confusion and division about the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Enter our text today, where we find the fifth thing everyone should know about the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

5. Spiritual gifts do not make us superior or inferior (Verses 14-17)

14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15 Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

- v14-15 Paul says the body is made up of many parts so the foot shouldn't say because I'm not a hand I'm not a part of the body.
- v16 He then says the ear doesn't stop being part of the body if it says because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body.
- v17 He says if the whole body were an eye, where is the sense of hearing, and if it were an ear where is the sense of smell.

- In order to better understand what Paul is saying to the Corinthian church, we have to know what was happening in that church.
- First in their using of the gifts there was an abusing of the gifts, such that, some who had gifts looked down on those who didn't.
- As such, this caused many problems within the church body, not the least of which were the attitudes that many of them had.

- Two very damaging attitudes existed in the church in Corinth, and so too are these attitudes alive and well in the church today.
- One of these damaging attitudes was that they were operating in the realm of their spiritual gifts out of an attitude of inferiority.
- The second damaging attitude conversely was that they were operating in the realm of their spiritual gifts in an air of superiority.

Romans 12:3–8 (NIV) — 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

- Paul explains that just as each of us has one body with many members, these members do not all function in the same way.
- The key word here is function in the sense that absent my understanding of how the body functions I will become dysfunctional.
- I not only become dysfunctional as a Christian individually but so too will I become dysfunctional in the church body collectively.

- When one functions as a member of the body of Christ, they will fulfill their purpose, which in turn fulfills them, because of it.
- In other words, when I realize I have a unique function as a member of the body of Christ, it gives me purpose, and with it joy.
- This because, I belong and have value as one of many members making up the body of Christ. I have a function and a role in it.

- Sadly, many a Christian has resigned themselves to this notion that they're insignificant and unimportant within the body of Christ.
- We do err greatly, when we mitigate the magnificence of those faithfully serving and ministering in obscurity and anonymity.
- Those unknown servants aren't perceived as having as much value in the body of Christ as those who are very well known.

- The bottom line is, while some think more highly of themselves than they ought others think less of themselves than they ought.
- You'll forgive my illustration of the human anatomy, but consider the paramount importance of just the function of our big toe.

- Not only is it indispensable so too are little toes, as they all feel the ground that we walk on and in so doing they balance us.
- While the little toes balance us, the big toe is also balancing us, so as to provide us with the strength we need to run, jog, etc.

- In fact, according to research it's believed that as much as 40% of our body's weight is carried by the big toe. Mine carries a lot!
- Were to lose our big toe, there would be some serious problems that would ensue by virtue of the importance of this body part.
- Simple things like walking would become extremely difficult. The other toes would become deformed balancing all that weight.

One commentator writes of the fictional account of a Master Tool Convention. As the story goes, Brother Hammer was appointed to preside over the Master Tool Convention. Brother Screwdriver objected, saying, "Brother Hammer, you're too noisy to preside over this meeting. You're always driving home your point, always nailing people. I call for your resignation immediately." Brother Hammer responded, "Well, what about you, Brother Screwdriver? All you ever do is spin around in circles." "That may be true," said Brother Screwdriver, "but at least I'm not like Brother Plane. His work is so surface, so shallow. What right does he have to even be here?" "If you're going to kick me out," protested Brother Plane, "what about Brother Ruler? He thinks he's always right, measuring everyone else by his standard." "Well, if you're going to come down on me," argued Brother Ruler, "what about Brother Pliers? He needs to get a grip!" "At least I don't rub people the wrong way," said Brother Pliers, staring at Brother Sandpaper." Just then, the Master Craftsman walked in. And, as He used each tool at the perfect time, He created an object of great beauty.